



# Partnership Card Activity

## Directions

Makes one set of cards. Print multiple sets for the number of groups (2-4 people) you will have.

- Print page 3 on blue
- Print page 4 on pink
- Print page 5 on yellow
- Print page 6 on orange
- Print page 7 on the backside of all four pages

Cut along lines to get five cards from each page. Place all four of the different colored cards in each of the categories together: Linking to Learning, Building Relationships, Supporting Advocacy, Addressing Differences, and Sharing Power. This is one set of cards for the group.

Have each group read through the cards for each category. Choose the one card for each category that best describes your school. Keep in mind that there might not be a card that matches exactly, but find the card that aligns most closely. Each group will end with one card for each of the five categories.

Use the table on the next page to discuss your school's results.

# SOUTH DAKOTA

STATEWIDE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CENTER



3 or more orange cards and no blue cards or pink cards	3 or more yellow cards and no blue cards	At least 4 blue or pink cards and no orange cards	At least 3 are blue and the rest are pink
Fortress School	Come-If-We-Call School	Open-Door School	Partnership School
<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Advanced</b>

## Discussion Questions

- What were you thinking as you read through the different cards?
- Do you agree or disagree with this assessment of your school?
- Which category do think your school struggles with the most? What category does your school do well?

- Our family center is always open, full of interesting learning materials to borrow
- Home visits are made to every new family
- Activities honor families' contributions
- Building is open to community use and social services are available to families

- All family activities connect to what students are learning
- Parents and teachers look at student work and test results together
- Community groups offer tutoring and homework programs at the school
- Students' work goes home every week, with a scoring guide



- Translators are readily available
- Teachers use books and materials about families' cultures
- PTA includes all families
- Local groups help staff reach parents

- There is a clear, open process for resolving problems
- Teachers contact families each month to discuss student progress
- Student-led parent-teacher conferences are held three times a year for thirty minutes



- Parents and teachers research issues such as prejudice and tracking
- Parent group is focused on improving student achievement
- Families are involved in all major decisions
- Parents can use the school's phone, copier, fax, and computers
- Staff work with local organizers to improve the school and neighborhood

- Teachers contact families once a year
- Parent coordinator is available if families have questions or need help
- Office staff are friendly
- Staff contact community agencies and organizations when help is needed

- Teachers explain test scores if asked
- Folders of student work go home occasionally
- School holds curriculum nights three or four times a year
- Staff let families know about out-of-school classes in the community



- Office Staff will find a translator if parents ask in advance
- Multicultural nights are held once a year
- "Minority" parents have their own group

- Principal will meet with parents to discuss a problem
- Regular progress reports go to parents, but test data can be hard to understand
- Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year



- Parents can raise issues at PTA meetings or see the principal
- Parent group sets its agenda and raises money for the school
- Resource center for low-income families is housed in a portable classroom next to the school
- PTA officers can use the school office
- A community representative sits on the school council or leadership team

- Better-educated parents are more involved
- “Many immigrant parents don’t have time to come or contribute”
- Staff are very selective about who comes into the school

- Parents are told what students will be learning at the fall open house
- Parents can call the office to get teacher-recorded messages about homework
- Workshops are offered on parenting



- “We can’t deal with twenty different languages”
- “Parents can bring a translator with them”
- “This school just isn’t the same as it used to be”

- School calls families when children have problems
- Families visit school on report card pickup day and can see a teacher if they call first



- Principal sets agenda for parent meetings
- PTA gets the school’s message out
- “Parents are not experts in education”
- Community groups can address the school board if they have concerns

- Families do not “bother” school staff
- “Minority families don’t value education”
- Parents need security clearance to come in
- It is important to keep community influences out of the school

- Curriculum and standards are considered too complex for parents to understand
- “If parents want more information, they can ask for it”
- “We’re teachers, not social workers”



- Those parents need to learn English”
- “We teach about our country—that’s what those parents need to know”
- “This neighborhood is going downhill”

- Parents don’t come to conferences
- Problems are dealt with by the professional staff
- Teachers don’t feel safe with parents



- Principal picks a small group of “cooperative parents” to help out
- Families are afraid to complain: “They might take it out on my kid”
- “Community groups should mind their own business; they don’t know about education”



**Linking to Learning**



**Building Relationships**



**Supporting Advocacy**



**Addressing Differences**



**Sharing Power**